

THE DOCTORS' PLOT!

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SURGEON-GENERAL'S OFFICE
MAR. 20 1898

A Report of Prof. Charles Wesley Emerson's Plea before the Public Health Committee of the Legislature in Opposition to the Proposed Bill to Regulate the Practice of Medicine in Massachusetts.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: I wish before speaking on this proposed Bill, to define my individual position by saying, first, I do not practice medicine, neither do I wish to, nor have I any personal friend practicing or wishing to practice, whom this Bill would in the least affect. I am not here in the interests of any person or class. Many of the members of the State Homoeopathic Society, as well as very many members of the Eclectic State Medical Society, together with some of the members of the Massachusetts State Medical Society, have petitioned you not to recommend legislation on this subject. But I do not represent any of these societies, nor do I represent the Spiritualists who oppose this Bill. I am not a Spiritualist, and have no belief in it whatever. I object to this Bill because it is opposed to the well-being of the people of this Commonwealth, by impeding progress in the art of curing disease.

The President of the Massachusetts State Medical Society stated to this Committee that the most useful information he had ever received was given him by a nurse. We have only begun to learn the practice of medicine. Scarcely any branch of it can be called exact science. There are some things to be learned yet, even in anatomy; and much in physiology. Progress in these two departments we must necessarily look to the learned for, but it does not follow that these learned scientists will be graduates of any medical college. The facts go to show that a large number of the discoveries in these sciences have come from men who are not M.D.s. Some of the names that stand the highest on this continent, and on the other, as discoverers and authors, whose books are looked upon as the best authorities contributing to the knowledge of anatomy and physiology, have never graduated from any medical college. Yet this Bill, if passed, will prevent such men not only from practicing medicine, but even debar them the privilege of an examination. It might seem to those who have only superficially examined this Bill that it is at least an intended stimulant to education. But it is not even this; for it will not permit a man to practice on the ground that he can pass a creditable examination on all the branches supposed to be requisite to a thorough medical education; for it will not even examine the candidate unless, in addition to his knowledge and fitness, he also presents the board of censors a diploma from some approved medical college. Disguise it as they may, the regular M.D.s of Massachusetts are simply asking for a monopoly, by the guarantee of a legislative enactment.

Progress in anatomy and physiology, as we have stated, comes in the nature of things from the learned, but the progress in therapeutics (the meaning of which Webster defines "that part of medicine which respects the discovery and application of remedies for diseases") has, and still continues to, come from the unlearned. The *materia medica* is almost entirely made from the discoveries of the uneducated. An entire change in the treatment of diseases has taken place in all schools during the last fifty years. Prior to that time the human system was literally loaded with mineral poison by the doctors, they vainly hoping that disease was not merely lack of health, but an entity, that could be killed by pouring deadly mineral poison into the body of the patient on the one hand, and on the other drawing away all the good blood in the arteries. Samuel Thomson was the first successful innovator upon this horrid system of practice; and he was an uneducated farmer, who could barely write his name. The ignorance in the learned profession was so great at that time concerning the remedial properties to be found in the vegetable kingdom, from which Thomson drew all his medicines, that upon Thomson's losing a patient he was arrested for willful murder; and at his trial the poison of which the patient was said to have died was brought forward by a regular M.D. of this same school in whose interest they would have you pass this Bill. Upon examination it was discovered to be the harmless root of marsh-mallows, used in making common candy at the present time. The cures this man wrought wherever he went seemed, in contrast with the success of the regular practitioner, to be little less than miraculous. The news of his wonderful cures spread abroad, not by his advertising them, but it was told from man to man. The people rejoiced in the new light, the physicians tried to suppress him, but the people would have him. At last the doctors said, if the people will be doctored by this quackery, viz., roots and herbs, we cannot lose our practice; and hence we are compelled to sit at the feet of this ignorant old "quack," and learn what he gives, and how he performs these wonderful cures. And so Thomson's remedies are now used by every medical school, though they still deify his name. And these compounds of Thomson's, and his many discoveries, to the number of more than one hundred, are sold by all druggists in America and Europe. His system now is a part of the recognized system, even among the members of the Massachusetts State Medical Society.

The Water Cure system has a similar history. So of all the different elements that now compose the regular practice. Every one was fought in its turn by the regular schoolmen; but the people were benefited, and therefore, notwithstanding it has ever been made scandalous to employ a person outside the regular practice, yet "all that a man hath will he give for his life." So these systems the regular schools were compelled to adopt, or else be left among the fossils of the past.

I brought before you a member of the family of the far-famed "natural bone setters." For two hundred and fifty years their system, called the "rotary" system, was fought back by the colleges of medicine, and kept out of the regular practice until the people were determined to have this graceful and easy method of bone-setting; and then the regulars were forced to adopt it; and again the schoolmen were compelled to move forward a step. Now they say, "Do not let any more men practice outside the regular system, for we are tired of moving on. We wish to draw our robes about us and rest. We might have been resting these hundreds of years had it not been for the 'quack' compelling us to learn first this improvement in medicine and then that, or else lose our practice and stand one side and see the money all go into the pockets of the man who cures, he having plenty and to spare, while we starve on our 'sheepskin.'"

It seems, at first thought, very strange that these marvelous improvements in treating disease, and even in bone-setting, should come from persons who have not read, and can give no scientific name to the diseases they cure, or even tell the anatomical names of the bones they set; yet these are the facts, and not even the promoters of this Bill will dare attempt a denial of them. But this seeming eccentricity of nature is not alone confined to discoveries in the healing art, but is true of nearly all the improvements. Common people give us our improvements, and the schoolmen spend their time in giving Greek and Latin names to these improvements, and building metaphysical theories concerning them. George Stevenson, the inventor of the locomotive, could scarcely read—he was a poor, ignorant collier. He knew nothing of the laws of mechanics, never heard of a school of Technology. Yet nobody thought the less of his invention because he could not pass an examination concerning the very principles of mechanics which he had been applying. Even Morse, the inventor of the electric telegraph, was not a scientist, and could not have passed a creditable examination before any college board of examiners; yet we do not think the less of these wires which, like so many nerves, bring into harmony all the families of man.

Again, disguise it as the friends of this proposed Bill may, the measure is a proposal for class-legislation! The immortal Lincoln said, "This is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." This Bill proposes to govern the people for the doctors, and by the doctors. It is even worse than that: it proposes to put this monopoly, not into the hands of all the educated, graduated physicians, but into the hands of those who happen at this time to be members of the different State Medical Societies.

At this point I wish to refer to the physician brought here, by the petitioners of this Bill, from New Hampshire, who was used for the purpose of making you believe that Massachusetts is full of "quacks." He read you quite a lengthy letter from a physician residing in Concord. The whole letter, if seen in the light of unvarnished facts, will show your honorable body who started this movement to legislate in favor of certain physicians, as some States have essayed to do, and which other States, when importuned, refuse to do, among the latter Wisconsin being entitled to honorable mention—a State which, while this hearing has been going forward, has nobly refused to legislate in favor of a class of men who are unable to convince the people that they are of sufficient value to the community to entitle them to patronage. The points in this letter, sent by one physician from New Hampshire and read to you by another, were to the effect that an attempt had been made to repeal the law in New Hampshire by some of its citizens, or, rather, by Massachusetts "quacks," together with a few persons in New Hampshire who had sent in dead men's names on the petition for a repeal! Notice the charge, gentlemen, which a physician in Concord makes against the inhabitants of his own State without any warrant or proof. What will the citizens of New Hampshire say when they hear what a physician in their capital has charged them with? This unfounded statement shows the true spirit of those who are interested in the making and perpetuity of such sumptuary laws. This writer would leave an entirely different impression from what is correct on your minds. In saying that a man from Lebanon tried to get this law repealed, and during the last session was seen hanging around the State House, "button-holing" the members; and that certain lawyers, who were members of the Legislature, were supposed to hold retainers' fees in their pockets. He went on to insinuate that money had been raised by Massachusetts "quacks" to do all these things, saying that somebody had said, in the steam-cars, to somebody else, that he would give one thousand dollars to get the law repealed. He further stated that the agitation against their New Hampshire law had been started by one Hayden in Massachusetts, etc., etc.

Now while all this is not precisely legitimate to the subject under discussion here, yet on the ground that the petitioners have seen fit to present this testimony for want of better, I shall attempt to show, by a true recital of this whole affair, what the real animus of these law-movers is. This physician from New Hampshire said at the time the repeal was attempted in that State, that talent was imported from abroad, insinuating that this wonderful thousand dollars given by somebody, nobody knows who, in addition to its buying up members of the New Hampshire Legislature, also sent this "talent" to advocate the repeal. The facts about this whole matter, gentlemen, are as follows: The law above mentioned had been in force in New Hampshire for about two years, when a member of the Legislature from Lebanon, who was not a doctor of the "quack" order, or any other, but a most estimable merchant, a noble, high-minded and genuine lover of humanity, discovering certain great wrongs that had been permitted under this doctors' monopoly, presented a Bill for a repeal of said law, and being an old and true friend of mine, and knowing that I saw the inhumanity of this law in the light in which he saw it, wrote me, asking if I would come to Concord and assist him in presenting the petition for a repeal; telling me there was no money to be paid, but if I would come and give my services in the name of humanity, to come. He did not know when the hearing would take place. Days went by and weeks; we could not understand the reason for the delay; at last a day was appointed, and we went, and found the city literally filled with doctors from all parts of the country. They had, on the day appointed for the hearing, a meeting of all the Societies in the State; then it dawned upon us why the delay for the hearing had been so long. These doctors appointed their speakers, and such a flocking of doctors to the State

House could only be accounted for on the ground that their craft was in danger. There were lawyers on the Committee before which the hearing came, and these lawyers reported in favor of a repeal, after hearing the argument on both sides. The writer of the letter I have just referred to as being sent by one physician and read before you by another, was one of the speakers appearing in favor of the New Hampshire law. One of the doctors came forward at that time, and declared that a "quack" in Massachusetts said he would give one hundred thousand dollars to repeal the law; they have now modified the report to one thousand; at this ratio of reduction by next year it will be ten cents.

Now compare these plain statements with the insinuations of this New Hampshire doctor's letter.

The same kind of spirit has been shown here to some extent. Only yesterday a statement was made here that of some fifty or more names for the remonstrants purporting to come from Salem, only three could be found in the Salem directory. As you yourselves will see by due investigation, these names did not purport to be from Salem. No place is affixed to these names. A forced construction was placed on the fact that the gentleman who placed these names on the table wrote something like this on the paper connected with their names: "Mr. So-and-So, from Salem, sends in so many names," the explanation of which is this: the gentleman who collected the names has an office in Salem, whence he sent this list; but he has business in other towns taking him daily from Salem, and he collected other names in the localities visited, presenting them all, at last, as the names of citizens of Massachusetts, without giving the place of residence, thinking it unnecessary to mention the towns visited, since this matter is not a town but a State affair. This simply shows to what extremes persons engaged in the engineering of this hoped for monopoly will go.

The object of the petitioners for the passage of this proposed Bill is to make the number of physicians in the State small, and thereby constitute the greatest money monopoly ever heard of in this country, or any other. Then every member of the profession in this State will have security of practice, whether he helps or hinders the sick, and they will not only have plenty to do, but can charge whatever price they please for their services, and there is no appeal; for there is no other doctor permitted to practice, without pains and penalties.

The real purpose and intent of the Bill is hidden under two very popular disguises. First, that of a higher standard of education, and secondly, the extermination of "quackery." We will notice these points in their respective order:

First, is this Bill in the interests of higher education? We have already shown that it will hinder progress in medical knowledge. Let us see what the Bill actually does by its licenses and prohibitions. In the very start it gives all the members of the various State societies a license to practice without an examination. And yet many of the members of these various State societies, it is well known, have never received a diploma from any medical college, and many others who have a diploma in said societies took it from some one of the very colleges this Board of Examiners will condemn.

Much has been said condemnatory of the ignorance of many doctors who are outside the pale of these State societies. I will offset that by stating something concerning the ignorance of those inside the pale: A druggist asked a gentleman the other day what he would make of the following: "Ag Moni." The gentleman, although a learned physician, did not know, neither did the druggist. Another member of the Massachusetts State Medical Society was asked to state what a common dose of morphine is. He replied from one to five grains. In one of your highly approved medical colleges of this State the old Caloric theory of heat was taught five years ago, and is to-day for aught I know. I should hope that learned (?) professor would not be on the Board of Examiners provided in this bill; for in that case no true and accepted scientist could get a license, simply because he would answer correctly, and the Professor would not know it.

Much has been said about the manifest ignorance of "quacks" who sign certificates of death. Did they give us anything that could excel the following from a regular M.D.? "Not certain of the cause of death. Do not know whether it was scarlet fever or from eating too much Bellona sausage."

They tell you this bill is for the purpose of weeding out pretenders; but they do not tell us how it is to work this most desirable change. They raise a great cry about "quacks." A "quack" simply means one who pretends to do something he cannot do. That there are such pretenders in the medical profession, and in every other profession, nobody thinks of denying; and far be it from me, or any opposer of this Bill, to defend such. The people all have a common interest in rooting out all such, and many persons have signed the petition for the passage of this Bill because it was represented to them that this would exterminate that obnoxious race; but has any one shown us how this Bill, if passed, has any power to sift them out? It has no such power, but, on the contrary, it protects them. It is a wall of fire around all the "quacks" who are inside the medical societies, and where is the man who possesses the audacity to say there are no "quacks" inside those societies? Yet this Bill will compel the people to employ them, because no choice is left them; for the number from which to choose, should such a Bill as this pass, would be kept exceedingly small. Note another means which this Bill provides for keeping the number small:

By the terms of this Bill no one is eligible to an examination merely because he is sufficiently learned, or has graduated, unless he shall have graduated from a college which they approve. Thus their power is wholly arbitrary. They can cut down the number of candidates, at any time, by disapproving the colleges from which they graduated, though every such college holds a charter from the State in which it exists. Again, another means is provided for lessening the number of physicians, in the clause about "a good moral character." The Bill provides that any person having a good moral character shall be licensed, if such person has practiced within the State ten consecutive years, yet, although this looks very fair on the face of it, by looking a little deeper we shall see that no criterion of morals is established, but the matter is left wholly to this Board of Examiners. How easy and how consistent it is with the entire spirit of this Bill to say, "If you have practiced ten years without being a member of our Society or having studied medicine in the regular way, you are a 'quack,' and you have been humbugging the people ten years, and no license shall be granted to a man who is immoral enough to humbug the people for that period." For if this Bill means anything it means to teach that all persons who have not been through a medical college are humbogs unless they belong to one of the State medical societies. Thus all such can be cut off.

They tell you of criminal practices among "quacks" that this Bill will put a stop to. Gentlemen, I hold in my hand the names of four physicians now residing in this city, who are members of the old Massachusetts State Medical Society. In good and regular standing, who have been before the court for the crime of producing abortion, and also the name of one who is now serving his time in the State Prison for arson; so that it seems that the Massachusetts State Medical Society is not in a condition to "cast the first stone"; but still it asks that you throw around them, by special legislation, the arm of the law, lest people shall employ better men outside the regular societies.

Again, this Bill takes away, without compensation, an honorable and successful business from a large number of persons, which is most unjust and cruel. And what does this law propose to call a crime? Simply this: the restoring to life and health a human being. This Bill does not ask the question, "Does this man cure the sick?" No; if he cures him twice, it makes him pay one thousand dollars; if he cures a patient three times, it imprisons him. Surely such a law is nothing better than barbarous.

Again, I object to the Bill because it practically puts into the hands of one medical society arbitrary power; and that society so hostile to the other societies that, according to the testimony of the president of that society, they will not counsel with a Homoeopath or an Eclectic, though the patient calling for counsel is dying and this counsel will save his life. This rests not alone upon the testimony of this president; it is one of the rules of the by-laws of said society. This Bill would force the two small State societies into the very jaws of this inhuman lion; although one quarter part of the members of one of these societies have sent in their written or verbal remonstrance; and a large and influential part of this other society also join in the remonstrance, led by no less a member than its worthy secretary, Dr. Morse, of Salem, a man of high social standing and extensive practice. Other eminent Homoeopathic physicians of this city, members of the State Society, and Professors in the Medical College, sent up their names, but you have not had time to hear them.

Again, I object to this Bill because it proposes to legislate away the sacred rights and dearest privileges of the people. What is so sacred to a man as his own life? Yet this Bill proposes he shall not be allowed to choose the means of his own recovery if he is ill.

Let us notice the ground upon which the petitioners ask for the passage of such a bill:

1st, They claim that the medical profession needs protection from the competition of "quacks," and to this end they brought a Bishop from, I do not know where, neither do I know what he was Bishop of—I only know the lawyer for the petitioners was very careful to make you understand he was a Bishop. This Bishop said the medical profession was a very honorable one and needed protection; he said also that the clergy needed protection just the same as the doctors, because there were so many "quacks" preachers. Now what is the burden of this argument? If it means anything it means, "We hope you will pass a bill to protect the doctors this year, and then a bill next year cutting off all ministers from preaching who are not in this" (or in some other bishop's) "diocese." I admire the candor of that Bishop, and I feel greatly obliged to him for helping our side so much. If he had said there is no difference between the doctors asking for a bill to protect them, and that of ministers asking one to protect the clergy, the advocates of this Bill would have said there was a difference; but now that it comes from one of their own choosing—one they had brought here because he was a Bishop, thinking thereby, as they have in several other instances, to overawe us—it strikes them dumb that this good, simple-hearted Bishop, should, all unintentionally, "let the cat out of the bag," by saying, in substance: "Please pass this Bill for the doctors, and then pass one for our ministers, so that we can get larger salaries, for we need more money as much as the doctors do."

They have brought you the names of other prominent clergymen. What we would like to know is, whether these clergymen who sent in their names for this petition know what they are doing, and are, hence, using this as an entering wedge to bring back the oppression of the ages gone by, or whether they do not see the bearing of this Bill. I am happy to say I incline to the latter opinion; for I know a number who signed this petition who are now sorry, saying they would never have signed it had they known its full meaning. All they meant by signing it was to get rid of pretenders, but they now see the Bill is not calculated in the least to do that, but is simply asking for the most crushing monopoly that ever bore down upon the common people. All this cry for the medical societies, all this telling how the poor members of the medical societies have flat pocket-books because the people will persist in employing other physicians is contemptible. Poor, poor regulars! how hungry they go because the people are not compelled to take their calomel, and prefer the harmless root and herb doctor! Why, all this lamentation in behalf

of the doctors, because they may not compel the people to employ them, makes me think of the little boy whose mother was showing him a picture of Daniel in the lions' den; the little fellow began to cry bitterly, when the mother said: "You pity poor Daniel, do not you, because the lions are going to eat him up?" His reply, amid his sobs, was, "I was not thinking anything about Daniel. I was thinking about that poor little lion in the corner, who won't get any, 'cause the old lions will eat him all up first."

In all this cry for a Bill to protect the members of the old medical societies, not a word is said for the common people, whom Daniel represents in the lions' den. This Bill takes away all possible competition, which is the only safeguard of the people.

No price for medical advice or treatment is mentioned in this Bill. All is left to the nine despots of the proposed Board of Examiners, clothed with absolute power, and these despots are the interested party. They may say, if the price is too high, people need not employ the doctor. But what kind of an apology is that? People cannot help being sick, and they cannot lie and die, as these monopolists very well know; hence those members of the medical societies, who have no practice now, and who, for want of natural fitness, ought never to have any, the people will be compelled to employ. Why, gentlemen, when I think of the inhumanity of this Bill, and, practically, those who advocate it, I am dumb with horror. The grocers might as well band themselves together and ask for legal monopoly. The friends of this Bill tell you there is an immense amount of malpractice among the outside doctors, yet they have failed to point out a single case. Go look at the law reports, and you will find scarcely a case of malpractice outside the members of these societies, while the reports of those inside are innumerable. They talk to us as though we had no law now to regulate the practice of medicine, when the truth is we have laws that cover every imaginable case of wrong doing, in this matter, that law can cover.

We have already, for instance, a law that if a man advertises himself as M.D. when he has not that title, he can at once be arrested for obtaining money under false pretences, and the penalty is State Prison. Again, we have the strictest laws concerning malpractice, making bad or injurious medical practice also a State Prison offence. Now I ask in all candor what more we need? No further legislation is possible without abridging the rights of the people by taking from them power to choose for one's self what physician he shall have.

Please notice this is a contest not between "quacks" on the one hand and educated, honest physicians on the other, but, simply, may the people elect the person they wish to treat them when sick, or may they not?

No testimony whatever has been brought, during this protracted hearing, against the practice of those who work outside the regular schools. Mark one thing in all the testimony presented: not a physician among the "irregulars" has testified; they have all modestly stayed in the background, while their works have praised them. The witnesses are persons in every walk of life except the doctors. Every one who has testified has stated that he was first given up to die by the regular physicians before he employed one of the outside physicians. The Regulars have no reason to complain, for all these persons gave them the first chance, and in many instances were doctored by them until they had no money left to pay the outside doctor who finally cured them. Does not this crowd of witnesses show plainly that if you will legislate some way, it certainly should not be against those who have wrought the cures?

The President of the old Massachusetts State Medical Society declared to you that cancer could not be cured. Thus, through the mouth of their chief, the regular physicians declare they cannot cure cancer; yet I have brought witness after witness to testify that they have been cured of cancer by these irregular physicians, whom this Bill would cut off from practice. One might say these were another kind of tumor, and not cancer; but we have been careful to guard that point by proving, in every case, that the regular physicians pronounced it a cancer, and incurable. The President, above referred to, said it was a blood disease, and hence incurable. The cases we have presented here have been well ever since the cancers were taken out, and they were taken out years ago. They testified that the doctors, who cured the cancers, gave them medicine for the blood at the same time. Thus we have proved that these cancer-curers take the cancer out without the use of the knife, and that their knowledge of blood-remedies enables them to eliminate all tendency to cancer from the blood. Can the people afford to be deprived of doctors who are known to cure cancers in innumerable cases, and be compelled to content themselves with a class of physicians who come in here and testify to you that they cannot cure a cancer? Cancer is a disease more dreaded than any other, and yet a very common disease. Think of the despair of the poor patient, when he is told by one of the doctors whom this Bill would protect and give the monopoly to, "You have a cancer, and I am powerless to help you. You must be eaten up slowly by this most loathsome disease while yet alive." Imagine this Bill taking effect as a law, and though the dying patient begs of the old cancer-curer for help, he dare not, for the prison walls loom up before his sight.

Who has favored this Bill beside the lawyers, who were hired to do so, and a few physicians? Did the honored President of the Boston University? To be sure he was brought before you to advocate that side. Did he do so? No. He warned you against putting so much power into the hands of one class. Not once did he favor this Bill by a single expression. His arguments were all on the other side; telling you of the tyranny concerning this medical matter in the despotic States of Europe. Did he ask you to follow the example of those old oppressive governments? No! Did the President of the Young Men's Christian Union favor this Bill? He did not say one word about the Bill.

The advocates of this Bill tell you the people need the guardianship of the Medical Society, because the people do not know what they want. This has ever been the voice of despotism. I will not go over the testimony in detail; I will content myself by mentioning a single case, which you recognize to be a fair representative of the testimony which has come before you, throughout this entire hearing:

Mr. Nye of Augusta, Me., sent to this honorable Committee a letter, asking you not to recommend any legislation in favor of any such law as this Bill proposes, in which he gives a statement of his own case and others. Permit me to tell you who this man is. He is Superintendent of an Orthodox Sunday school. He has been Treasurer of the Maine Central Railroad for seventeen years, and for many years State Commissioner of Insurance; also Centennial Committee from Maine; a man of the highest standing. This gentleman testifies that he was taken ill while on a visit to West Point, some ten years since, with sciatica. The eminent surgeon of the place attended him, but gave him no relief; finally told him he could not hope to be better for one year, at least. He then came home and employed the most eminent of the Maine doctors, but with no success. Finally, a magnetic healer, (a resident of Boston), cured him with one treatment. Mr. Nye also speaks of the case of his wife, who had a cancer. The best doctors of Boston, the most eminent in the regular faculty, were consulted. Finally they decided that within ten days the knife would be her only chance of prolonging life. A clairvoyant said, "Do not use the knife." A magnetic healer was then employed, and the wife was cured. This was ten years ago, and the wife has been well up to date. These, gentlemen, are not isolated cases, but of every-day and hour occurrence, in every part of the State.

Gentlemen, although I do not, like my brother Giles here, believe spirits of the departed produce these cures, yet we all must believe that some great physiological law is here involved, the discovery of which is of the highest value to mankind; and I ask you, in the name of God and humanity, not to recommend a bill that shall cut off these benefactors from practicing within this Commonwealth.

You must have noticed the great crowd that has attended this hearing from the first. You also have not failed to notice, by their demonstrations, that they are utterly opposed to this Bill, and most of them eager to testify what great good has been done them by the persons whom this Bill will cut off. A mother became so anxious that, although the time was filled, yet she cried out to you from the depths of her grief and fear, in the name of God, not to pass this Bill, for her life and that of her friends had been saved by these persons of natural medical genius.

I but voice the prayer of the vast majority of the citizens of this Commonwealth when I pray you not to deprive us of the help of those persons who have again and again proved themselves possessed of the natural and improved gifts which make them the physicians! Will you take away the persons who have been our family physicians for years, in whom we have the utmost confidence, who have saved us and our little ones when all scholastic skill gave us up to die, and in their places compel us to take the young man just passed from the hand of this board of censors, with no other claim upon our confidence than the fact that he has a good memory or is the son of a rich father who would have him a professional man, because it gives him higher caste in society, when, according to the laws of his organization, he should have been a coal heaver, or at best a shoemaker?

The subject before us is of the gravest character. It is a matter of individual choice in a case of life and death. In the simplest words possible, we pray you not to take away from us, the common people, the one we choose to stand by in the hour of our sorest need. Do not take away from us—who believe that Dr. Morse, of Salem, who was for years a professor in the medical department of the Boston University, spoke the truth when he said that some men were born physicians, and such were always successful practitioners, even if uneducated, while he knew many who, though having graduated from the oldest medical college in Massachusetts, were never known to help a patient—the power to choose these natural physicians, to whose wonderful cures so many testify.

The natural physicians will not go to your approved medical college; they have methods of study peculiar to themselves. Think of the "Sweet family of natural bone setters" being compelled to go through a medical college in their time, when in after years every medical college was obliged to learn of them, or the college go unpatriotized. They say: "These men may go to college if they have this natural genius." That is easily enough said, but will they tell me when in the history of the world David would wear Saul's armor when he went out to fight the giant? They will simply give up practice if you pass this law, and we shall be deprived of their most valuable services. I do not plead for them. They do not need us; we need them! The man of genius always stands on the dignity of his God-given powers, and says to the world, what Edmund Burke said when he was finally shut out of Parliament: "Gentlemen, I can afford to get along without you, if you can without me." It is the fifth-rate men who go down on their knees, crawling in the dust to get place and power, as is amply illustrated in the little fifth-rate doctors who ask for this monopoly for their benefit. Not one of the doctors the Old School calls "quacks" has appeared here asking you not to pass this Bill. They can afford to stand back, as they have stood. But we, who wish their help, cannot afford to stand back and see our rights taken from us, not only the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but the right to life; unless we can live in spite of all the poison that the old Allopath would pour down our throats, and charge us what he pleases for.

The people do not want this Bill, therefore I pray you will not recommend it!

Compton (C.W.)
The Barton plot: +xxx

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